Amateur Radio Newsline™ Report 1408 August 6, 2004

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A WORD FROM THE ARNEWSLINE (tm) SUPPORT FUND

The following is not necessarilly for retransmission. I guess you already know that if you are hearing my voice on a closed-circuit advisory it means that Newsline is again facing a financial crisis. Well, you're right.

The solution to the problem really lies with you. Our world-wide all volunteer staff produces these newscasts for you. The all volunteer Young Ham of the Year Committee labors tirelessly each year to select a youngster to receive the Award. Joe Eisenberg, K0NEB, oversees the Newsline sponsored Roy Neal, K6DUE, Amateur Radio Mentoring Project database, doing so at no cost. The list goes on and on.

I too am a volunteer, but I have to be the realist. I'm the accountant who has to look at the bottom line and when it turns red, I have to say -- hold on -- there is no more money to continue. And that's about where we are right now.

So, here's the bottom line. If you want the newscasts to continue. If you want the mentoring program to continue and the Young Ham of the Year Award to continue, we need you to show it now -- right now -- through your financial support of Amateur Radio Newsline.

Remember that Amateur Radio Newsline is a federally chartered 501(C)(3) and California state not-for-profit corporation. This makes your donations tax deductible, whether you're an individual or a club. The address to send them to is the Amateur Radio Newsline Support Fund, Post Office Box 660937, Arcadia California 91066. If you missed the address don't worry. It will be repeated at the end of this week's report.

For now I thank you for listening, for responding and offer you this weeks newscast which follows immediately. (ARNewsline Support Fund)

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Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1408 with a release date of Friday, August 6th, 2004 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. The B-P-L battelground expands in

California and Texas while a U-K repeater is ordered off the air. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1408 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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THE BPL FIGHT: SAN DIEGO CA. UTILITY REPORTEDLY CONSIDERING BPL

San Diego California could be the next B-P-L battleground. This, as an informed source tells the CGC Communicator broadcast industry newsletter that San Diego Gas & Electric is considering the deployment of Broadband over Power Lines in its service area. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, is here with the specifics:

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According to Gonsett's CGC newsletter, an informed source has told him that San Diego Gas & Electric's communication systems planners met recently and are seriously considering endorsing and sponsoring B-P-L on the unility's power distribution system. The newsletter also says that San Diego Gas & Electric is considering entertaining proposals to partner with vendors for one or more field demonstrations of B-P-L technology.

CGC says that these plans should be of concern to all users of the High Frequeny and low band VHF spectrum. This includes TV Channels 2 through 5 and possibly even Channel 6. The latter because spurious and harmonic energy could reach these higher frequencies.

According to CGC and its unnamed source, San Diego Gas & Electric is aware that deployment of B-P-L in its service arera could cause considerable radio frequency interference. Even so, planners at the utility still appear ready to proceed.

More on this as it develops. I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in Los Angeles.

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Bob Gonsett is known on the ham bands as W6VR. He says that he has a call pending with San Diego Gas & Electric corporate communications department to determine the company's official position on BPL. Bob

also says to stay tuned for updates. (CGC)

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THE BPL FIGHT: A TEXAS TRYOUT

Meantime, Larry Pollack, of the W5YI VEC reports that Central Texas-based Broadband Horizons has launched B-P-L operations in three Texas communities. The pilot projects were launched in mid-June in the towns of Blanco, Burnet and Weimar. According to Mike Steele, Burnet's City Manager, the community has had great success with the initial start-up. He says the city plans to expand B-P-L service it to additional parts of the municipality.   (W5YI VEC)

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THE BPL FIGHT: A BIG WIN IN PEN YAN NY

Meantime the B-P-L test is over in Pen Yan, New York and it appears as if ham radfio has won this round. This,, with word that the broadband provider that's been testing B-P-L in Penn Yan reportedly plans to "move away" from that technology.

According to the ARRL Letter, the Western New York community of some 5000 residents has been considering various proposals with Data Ventures to offer broadband service. A B-PL trial had been underway in Penn Yan for several months.

The village reportedly would get 10 percent of the generated revenue. Now, according to an article in the July 28th edition of the Finger Lakes Times Online, the provider is now proposing to employ wireless mesh "WiFi" technology instead of BPL and ARRL C-E-O Dave Sumner, K1ZZ, has already congratulated Penn Yan Mayor Douglas Marchionda Jr and DVI for going with wireless broadband instead of B-P-L. (ARRL)

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THE BPL FIGHT: SPOKANE GOES WIDE AREA WI-FI

Spokane, Washington has also opted for Wi-Fi over B-P-L. This as that city inaugurates a wireless Internet access system covering 100 blocks of downtown Spokane.

The wireless zone uses new technology that allows Internet signals to be transmitted more than a mile. This is far beyond the traditional 200- to 300-foot range of previous Wi-Fi systems.

The Wi-Fi area is divided into a private network for use by the city and an open network for the public. Public users can connect for two hours a day at no charge, and subscription plans are in the works for extended use. One Eighty Networks provided the networking for the project. (Published reports)

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Break 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world WR6ABD repeater serving Aptos California.

(5 sec pause here)

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RADIO RULES: NO MORE "GROUP X" CALLSIGNS

The ARRL reports that the FCC is no longer issue 2 by 3 format vanity call signs that begin with the prefixes WC, WR, WK and WT. The Commission has acknowledged that it erroneously granted more than 150 WR and WC prefix 2 by 3 vanity call signs from 1997 through September 2003, when it began rejecting such call sign requests.

In the late 1970s, the FCC announced a new Amateur Service call sign assignment system. It provided four standard call sign groups, designated Group A, B, C and D, delineated by license class and issued sequentially with no backfilling. The FCC's Bill Cross, W3TN, recently told the nation's volunteer examiner coordinators that the FCC also had a "Group X." These included WC or RACES, WR repeater, WK and WT-prefix 2 by 3 format call signs reportedly reserved for special-use licenses.

The FCC stopped issuing repeater call signs in 1983 and ceased renewing RACES licenses in 2000. After the current vanity program began in 1996, several ham clubs sought new and formerly held repeater and RACES-type call signs. When the Universal Licensing System came along in August 1999, however, the FCC encountered some licensing system programming shortcomings, including the anomalous assignments of WC and WR prefix 2 by 3 call signs as acceptable formats.

When the FCC implemented programming corrections that halted the issuance of Group X call signs in September 2003, it did not advise the amateur community. As a result, several amateurs who filed for 2 by 3 WC or WR prefix call signs had their applications dismissed without any explanation beyond saying that the applicant's call sign choice was unavailable. That remains the case. The FCC has not indicated whether it plans to address the WC and WR prefix 2 by 3 call signs it's already issued.

In a related matter, the FCC's new Amateur Radio vanity call sign regulatory fee of $20.80 for the 10-year license term goes into effect Friday, August 6. All applications received at the FCC on or after that date must be accompanied by the new, higher fee. (ARRL)

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ENFORCEMENT: RIS ORDERS REPEATER OFF THE AIR

A 2 meter repeater in the United Kingdom has been ordered off the air after it was involved in an interference issue. The Leicestershire GB3CF system which operates on 145.600 MHz, was closed down on Sunday the 25th of July following a request by the Radio Investigation Service due to an alleged incident of interference.

Service will be resumed as soon as investigations have been completed. The report did not say if the repeater was causing interference to other operations or if it was being interfered with. (GB2RS)

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RADIO LAW: FEDERAL COURT RULES AGAINST CALIFORNIA CITY

Meantime, on this side of the Astlantic a big win for radio operations but another major loss for a city in its fight to restrict towers and antennas. Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, reports:

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The attorney for a Rancho Palos Verdes California antenna owner says that his client won a clear victory against the city. This, following a recent federal district court decision requiring Rancho Palos Verdes to allow him to operate a broadcasting business from his unoccupied home. The judge also ruled that the plaintiff, James A

Kay. Jr., may seek damages and legal costs.

And this is not the first major loss for the city. Earlier this year, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that another Rancho Palos Verdes antenna owner could seek compensatory damages against the city. As previously reported, Mark Abrams, WA6DPB, said he will file a claim for damage to his two way radio business while he and the city fought numerous court battles over the right to regulate commercial radio frequencies.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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Abrams has a 52 foot tall antenna tower in his backyard. The city has appealed the case to the U.S. Supreme Court. The full story is on-line at
http://pvnews.nminews.com/articles/2004/07/26/local_news/news1.txt

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RADIO LAW: AN ANTENNA FREE ZONE

A real estate developer in Australia has come up with some of the toughest property use restrictions ever dreamed of. W-I-A Newscaster Graham Kemp, VK4BB, joins us with the details:

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VK2WI have reported on a story that the Albury-Wodonga Development Corporation has set some restrictions on its new 40 block Thurgoona subdivision, near Albury.

Listeners to this WIA National News service through the 146.75 repeater can shed any thoughts of establishing a shack in the backyard, as the corporation has banned the erection of free - standing garages or sheds. One may also forget about erecting any antenna arrays as the corporation has also banned external TV antennas, any TV antennas should be placed under the roof or be internal.

Satellite dishes are also under scrutiny; you can have one, as long as no one can see it!

For the Am ateur Radio Newsline, Im Graham Kemp, VK4BB.

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With these restrictions in place the potential amateur radio activity, using external antennas, is virtually impossible. (VK2GJH via WIA News)

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RESCUE RADIO: WX4NHC ACTIVATED FOR HURRICANE ALEX

WX4NHC, the Amateur Radio Station at the National Hurricane Center in Miami was activated on August 3rd. This, in anticipation of the arrival of the first major tropiocal storm of the 2004 hurricane season.

Named Alex, the storm was a catigory one hurricane when the WX4NHC came to life at about 10 a-m Eastern on Tuesday morning. Catigory one means the storm had sustained winds of 75 MPH. It was forecast to strengthen before tracking just off the coast of North Carolina on Tuesday afternoon.

The WX4NHC Group monitored the Hurricane Watch Net on 14.325 Mhz. It also took part in EchoLink and I-R-L-P Skywarn Nets that were operational during the approach and departure of the storm.

WX4NHC has maintained an active Amateur Radio Station at the National Hurricane Center for the past 24 years. Please visit www.wx4nhc.org/WX-form1.html www.voipwx.net for details. (CQ)

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RADIO LAW: IMPROVING AIRSPACE SAFETY

Garmin, Inc. has been conditionally granted its request to use 978 MHz as an aircraft radio datalink frequency. The idea is to enhance flight safety by enabling aircraft in the same airspace to precisely track each other's movement, reducing the risk of mid-air collisions. Datastreams containing location, velocity, altitude and heading are valuable commodities in the arena of air safety. More is o-line at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-04-1871A1.doc (CCG)

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ON THE NET: TEENS SET WIFI RECORD

A group of teenage hamss from the Cincinnati area got an ovation at the recent Las Vegas DefCon hacker conference. This, after organizers announced that the winners of this year's Wi-Fi shootout might have broken a world D-X record for ground distance in establishing a 55.1-mile Wi-Fi connection.

Ben Corrado KC8RKO, Andy Meng N8MX, Justin Rigling KC8OIO and Brandon Schamer KG4NVK won the prize for greatest distance achieved for an 802.11b network.

The teens, all 18 and 19 years old achieved the record using an amplifier and homebrewed antennas on both ends. This exceeded last year's distance winner by 20 miles. Then, when they established that record, they turned off their amplifiers and broke the record for an unamplified connection at the same distance.

DefCon, in its 12th year is a gathering of hackers, security professionals and intelligence agents from around the world. The Wi-Fi shootout, held for the second time, is among the most popular contests. Six teams participated but it was ham radio know-how that came in number one. (N0AX)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: GEORGE DILLON NAMED ASSISTANT CHIEF OF THE FCC ENFORCEMENT BUREAU

Some names in the news. Word that George R. Dillon has been named Assistant Bureau Chief of the Enforcement Bureau. Dillon most recently served as the Bureau's Engineering Advisor, assisting the Bureau Chief on a wide range of public safety, technical and management projects. He also represents the Bureau on the Commission's "Engineering-in-Training" Board, for which he received the Chairman's Special Achievement Award, and was the principal leader of the Knowledge Sharing Program, which permits field engineers and headquarters engineers to exchange information and expertise. He is also a member of the Spectrum Policy Task Force. FCC)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: G4IDE NAMED WINNER OF TAPR LIFETIME AWARD

And Tuscon Amateur Packet Radio has presented its Lifetime Achievement Award to Roger Barker G4IDE, of Lincolnshire, in the U-K. Barker was honored for his work over the years in providing quality software for Amateur Radio operators that allows them to operate advanced digital modes without the difficulties once associated with these operations. T-A-P-R says that Baker's UI-View program is the benchmark by which all other A-P-R-S mapping software is compared to. (VK2TDS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: NEW U-K HAM TRANSPONDER IN SPACE ANNOUNCED

AMSAT-UK has announced a new amateur band transponder project. One to be launched as part of the European Space Agency's S SETI Express satellite.

The project was announced at the opening of the 2004 AMSAT-UK Colloquium by Dr. Martin Sweeting, G3YJO. Sweeting expressed his delight that AMSAT-UK has been able to work with the European Space Agency to provide, at very short notice, an S band 2.4ghz transmitter.

The SSETI Express project is believed to be the first ever pan-European student satellite with over 100 students from more than nine different countries working on it. The project is being coordinated and managed buy the Education Office of the European Space Agency. (AMSAT-UK, GB2RS)

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SPACE SCIENCE: SMALLER ISS PRESENCE ANNOUNCED

NASA and its space partners have approved a scaled-down International Space Station with fewer astronauts and less science. This, so the United States can meet a 2010 deadline for ending shuttle flights.

According to news reports, the space agencies of Russia, Europe, Canada and Japan gave unanimous approval to a NASA plan that means the orbiting platform, now about half completed, will never become the beehive of scientific and commercial research once envisaged. In exchange, NASA will continue with plans to launch research modules owned by its partners, some of them already built.

The agreement means the station will never support long duration crews of seven astronauts, as originally planned. It will however be able to house at least four astronauts starting in 2009.

Phase one of the space-station was put into orbit in 1998. The first astronauts took up residence in 2000. (Published reports)

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ON THE AIR: OH2B BEACON IS BACK ON THE AIR

Finland's OH2B beacon is back on the air after an absense of two years. OH2B is one of the eighteen stations in the world-wide five-band International Beacon Project network. It has already been heard in the UK on 14.100, 18.110, 21.150, 24.930 and 28. 200 Mhz. (GB2RS)

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DX

In D-X, word that K4ZLE is returning to Uganda. He plans to operate as 5X2A through the 21st of August. Some effort will be made to operate on the lower H-F bands this year, mostly on CW. Activity is also planned for PSK31. (GB2RS)

And F6EAY is in Kabul, Afghanistan and has been issued the callsign T6RF. At present he is active only on PSK31. QSL as directed on the air. (GB2RS)

Closer to home K-7-B-V reports that he will operate portable VP5 from the Turks and Caicos Islands from August 9th to the 16th. The trip will have focus on 6 and 2 meter WSJT work during the Perseid Meteor shower that peaks around August 12. H-F will, of course, get plenty of attention as well. QSL direct to K7BV. (VHF Reflector)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: THE BIRDS ARE BACK

And finally this week, have you ever tuned in an owl? Yes, we said an owl. You know, tne find that go hoot in the night. Newsline's Joe Moell K0OV will tell you how.

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It's been several months since I've advised you of opportunities for hams and scanner fans to help wildlife researchers tracking radio-tagged creatures. You can monitor these signals from your home or car. If you have direction finding gear, you might make a positive sighting. Right now, there's a need for ham help in the Denton and Collin County areas of Texas, where researcher Jennifer Johnston is releasing rehabilitated orphan Great Horned Owls into the wild. Six birds are on the air near 150 MHz as I speak, and more are expected to follow. We're also standing by for the departure of some young Burrowing Owls from their nesting places in Florida. A biologist from the University of South Florida wants know where they will end up. Nobody knows, but maybe you can help find out.

For all the details, including frequencies and ideas for equipping yourself for this project, go to www.homingin.com. That's HomingIn, as one word, homingin.com.

Thanks for your help. From southern California, where Burrowing Owls are raising their young in our own Imperial Valley, this is Joe Moell, K-zero-oscar-victor, for Amateur Radio Newsline.

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Again that website is www.homingin.com (K0OV, ARNewsline(tm)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's Q-News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline @arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD, saying 73 and we thank you for listening." Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) is Copyright 2004. All rights reserved.